

Communist Protesters Rally in Vladivostok Against Alleged Election Rigging

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Andrei Ishchenko (Anton Balashov / TASS)

Communist protesters have rallied against alleged election rigging in the Pacific port city of Vladivostok on Monday following the loss of their candidate in gubernatorial elections to the incumbent from the ruling United Russia party.

Gubernatorial elections went into a second round in the region on Sunday after no candidates secured an all-out majority on election day Sept. 9. Primorye was one of four Russian regions in which ruling party candidates were forced into runoffs by candidates from other parties.

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Preliminary results published on Monday [put](#) Andrei Tarasenko of the ruling United Russia Party ahead of the Communist Party's Andrei Ishchenko by 1.49 percent, or 7,650 votes.

Late on Sunday, Ishchenko had held a 3-point lead over Tarasenko before live updates paused after 9 p.m.

"Resign! Resign! Resign!" an estimated 500 people chanted outside the Vladivostok administration building Monday after Ishchenko called on Tarasenko to step down. The spontaneous rally was broadcast by the Neuromir.tv online news outlet.

Ishchenko called on supporters to gather outside the Vladivostok administration building every evening after work until the vote is declared invalid.

The local Vl.ru news site [reported](#) opposition leader Alexei Navalny's representatives have joined the demonstration. Later on Monday, Navalny [wrote](#) a blog post calling on residents from across the region to travel to Vladivostok to rally against the vote results.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the presidential administration was monitoring events on the ground and told reporters to follow updates from the federal election commission. Ella Pamfilova, the head of the Central Election Commission (CEC), said that by the end of the week, the results could either be accepted or declared invalid if vote-rigging complaints were proven true.

Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov [called on](#) President Vladimir Putin to form a special commission to investigate the vote-rigging claims.

"What we got in the Primorye elections was criminal lawlessness," Zyuganov was [quoted](#) as saying by the RBC news website.

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